



**PLA Service and Theater Command Articles
Published in January 2025**

Introduction

This is the first Exovera report examining English and Chinese articles that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) publishes online to cover activities by the four Services in protocol order (Army/PLAA/陆军, Navy/PLAN/海军, Air Force/PLAAF/空军, and Rocket Force/PLARF/火箭军) and the five Theater Commands (TC/战区) in protocol order (Eastern/ETC/东部战区, Southern/STC/南部战区, Western/WTC/西部战区, Northern/NTC/北部战区, and Central/CTC/中部战区). Although the PLA also posts the *PLA Daily* (解放军报) newspaper in Chinese on a separate tab on www.81.cn, this report does not include information from that website.

In January 2025, Exovera published a detailed report entitled *Analysis of the PRC's Ministry of National Defense Websites* that explains how to access the two English-language websites and two Chinese-language websites.¹ See Appendix A for a list of acronyms. Most sources withheld. Please [contact us](#) to obtain the source list.

- English-language websites
 - The Ministry of National Defense (<http://eng.mod.gov.cn/>)
 - China Military (<http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/>)
- Chinese-language websites
 - 中华人民共和国国防部/ Ministry of National Defense (<http://www.mod.gov.cn/>)
 - 中国军网 (China Military Network) (<http://www.81.cn/?big=jian>).

However, as noted in *Analysis of the PRC's Ministry of National Defense Websites*, beginning in January 2025, the PLA stopped providing English-language articles on the two websites noted above. Specifically, Figure 1 shows the Military Services Tab and Figure 2 shows the Theater Commands Tab on the Ministry of National Defense (MND) website.

¹ *Analysis Of The PRC's Ministry Of National Defense Websites*, Exovera, 28 January 2025, <https://exovera.com/reports/analysis-of-the-prcs-ministry-of-national-defense-websites/>.

Figure 1: MND Website Military Services Tab

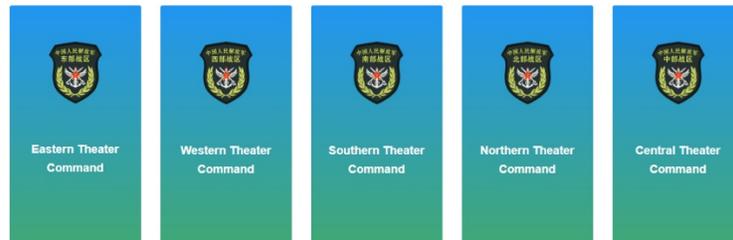


Army



The PLAA plays an irreplaceable role in maintaining China's national sovereignty, security and development interests. It comprises maneuver operation, border and coastal defense, and garrison forces. Under the PLAA, there are 5 TC army commands, the Xinjiang military command, and the Tibet military command. The ETC Army has under it the 71st, 72nd, and 73rd group armies; the STC Army has the 74th and 75th group armies; the WTC Army has the 76th and 77th group armies; the NTC Army has the 78th, 79th and 80th group armies; and the CTC Army has the 81st, 82nd and 83rd group armies.

Figure 2: MND Website Theater Commands Tab



Prior to January 2025, you could click on each service and force, and it would open up a link to Chinamil.com with several related articles and photos that go back as far as 2019 for some services.² For example, an Exovera report entitled *What The PLA Air Force Says About Itself* had about 280 articles from the Chinamil.com Air Force Tab.³ You could also click on each Theater Command arm patch photo shown in Figure 2, and it would open up a link to Chinamil.com with several related articles and photos that went back as far as 2019 for some services.⁴ However, clicking on any of the above items today does not take you to any other websites.

In addition, no new English-language articles from 2025 for the four services and five TCs have been published in the ARMED FORCES Tab of the China Military (chinamil.com/cn) website shown in Figure 3.

² Several links worked prior to January 2025, but do not work anymore. Contact us to obtain the source list.

³ Kenneth W. Allen and Brian Lafferty, *What the PLA Air Force Says About Itself*, Exovera, 19 October 2023, <https://cira.exovera.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/What-the-PLA-Air-Force-Says-About-Itself.pdf>.

⁴ Several links worked prior to January 2025 but do not work anymore. Contact us to obtain the source list.

Figure 3: China Military Website



Although no articles concerning the services were found in the relevant Military Service or Armed Forces tabs, one PLAN and one PLAAF article were found in the Top Stories tab and are discussed later.

Figure 4 provides a list of the PLAA’s 13 Group Armies (GA/集团军) by Theater Command, Unit number, 5-digit Military Unit Cover Designator, and location (city and province). A total of 12 PLAA articles identify the Group Armies by their number, such as the 72nd Group Army.

Figure 4: 13 PLA Army Group Armies

Group Armies in new Theater Commands

Current TC	Group Army
Eastern TC	71 st Group Army (31655) in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province
	72 nd Group Army (31657) in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province
	73 rd Group Army (31659) in Xiamen, Fujian Province
Southern TC	74 th Group Army (31661) in Huizhou, Guangdong Province
	75 th Group Army (31663) in Kunming, Yunnan Province
Western TC	76 th Group Army (31665) in Xining, Qinghai Province
	77 th Group Army (31667) in Chongzhou, Chengdu, Sichuan Province
Northern TC	78 th Group Army (31669) in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province
	79 th Group Army (31671) in Liaoyang, Liaoning Province
	80 th Group Army (31673) in Weifang, Shandong Province
Central TC	81 st Group Army (31675) in Zhangjiakou, Hebei Province
	82 nd Group Army (31677) in Baoding, Hebei Province
	83 rd Group Army (31679) in Xinxiang, Hebei Province

It is not clear why the PLA has stopped publishing English-language articles on these two websites since the majority of the foreign community, including foreign military attachés in China, do not speak or read Chinese and rely on English articles. Although the English articles have disappeared, there are still a lot of Chinese articles in the two websites noted earlier, which are discussed below.

Key Findings

This section provides 10 key findings (KF) concerning the articles published in January 2025.

- **KF1:** As noted in the Introduction, the PLA has stopped providing any English articles on the MND and Chinamil.com websites. It is not clear why this has happened.
- **KF2:** Of the 71 articles found, only two of them are in English and were found in the “Top Stories” tab.
- **KF3:** Of the 69 Chinese articles, 30 of them are about the PLAA.
- **KF4:** Articles are published on all seven days of the week.
- **KF5:** Of the 10 Theater Command articles, four of them are repeats of the relevant service articles, but they have a different link.
- **KF6:** The PLAA identifies the 13 Group Armies by their number, of which 10 were identified in articles. Of the 10, two of them were identified in two separate articles. This implies that there is probably a monthly requirement and a quota for the number of articles published for each Group Army.
- **KF7:** Multiple articles identify problems the units are having.
- **KF8:** Several articles mention issues concerning cold weather and high altitude.
- **KF9:** There are no articles about combined training with other countries.
- **KF10:** Understanding and following Party guidance is highlighted multiple times.

Overview of January 2025 Articles

This section is organized into the following three tables:

1. Number of January 2025 Articles
2. Articles Published by Days of the Week
3. Thumbnail of Each English Article

Table 1 shows the total number of English and Chinese articles that were found during January.

Table 1: Number of January 2025 Articles

Service	English Articles	Chinese Articles
Army	0	30
Navy	1	13
Air Force	1	8
Rocket Force	0	8
Theater Command		
Eastern	0	3
Southern	0	1
Western	0	1
Northern	0	4
Central	0	1
TOTAL	2	69

Table 2 shows the number of articles published each day of the week.

Table 2: Articles Published by Days of the Week

Day	Articles
Mon	5
Tue	21
Wed	11
Thu	16
Fri	8
Sat	3
Sun	9

Table 3 provides information from each of the two English language articles that are organized into the following columns. (Please [contact us](#) to obtain a document containing all articles with English translations.)

- Category: PLAN and PLAAF
- Fn: citation
- Date: article date
- Themes: key themes in the article

Table 3: Thumbnail of Each English Article

Category	FN	Date	Themes
PLAN	6	01/24/25	The 46 th Escort Task Force returned home from the Gulf of Aden after 339 days.
PLAAF	7	01/23/25	J-11 multi-role fighter jets conducted a force-on-force training exercise.

Table 4 provides information from each of the 71 Chinese articles that are organized into the following columns by service, Theater Command, and chronological order:

- Category: PLAA, PLAN, PLAAF, PLARF, ETC, STC, WTC, NTC, CTC
- Fn: citation
- Date: article date
- Themes: key themes in the article

Of note, four of the same articles are listed in the relevant service and Theater Command sections.

Table 4: Thumbnail of Each Chinese Article

Category	FN	Date	Themes
PLAA	8	01/02/25	An 82 nd GA brigade organized the “Parents of New Soldiers Entering the Barracks” activity
	9	01/04/25	A 75 th GA brigade conducted field training and thoroughly studied and implemented the spirit of Xi Jinping’s Guidance at the CMC PWD Conference to take their battle position, learn to promote work, and win.
	10	01/06/25	In the cold winter, a certain composite brigade quickly moved to the combat area in multiple routes according to the combat formation to conduct a multi-service coordinated training similar to actual combat began.

11	01/06/25	The high-altitude company outposts (above 5,000 meters) have achieved diversified oxygen supply and system oxygen supply, and the oxygen supply mode has undergone tremendous changes.
12	01/07/25	An 80 th GA helicopter unit conducted live-fire shooting training of multiple types of ammunition, including working closely together to carry out low-altitude covert maneuvers and quickly approach the target airspace.
13	01/07/25	An 81 st GA brigade carried out the planning of military training for the new year in accordance with the law and regulations. A brief discussion of previous problems.
14	01/07/25	An 82 nd GA brigade in the CTC held the annual “Loyalty Vanguard” awards ceremony.
15	01/07/25	The PLAA has established grassroots communication networks for personnel stationed in remote border defense areas in Xinjiang to communicate with their families.
16	01/07/25	A detailed discussion about problems soldiers in Tibet’s Shigatse Military Sub-district deals with due to altitude and winter weather conditions, including medicine, food, and power shortage.
17	01/08/25	A discussion about how personnel need to deal with daily issues in and around their barracks.
18	01/08/25	A discussion about the daily life of personnel in an NTC border defense company
19	01/11/25	A regiment in Xinjiang conducts live-fire shooting training to improve the ability of new shooters to perform tasks
20	01//12/25	A brief discussion about the first training event of the year for a battalion
21	01/12/25	In the middle of winter, a 77 th GA brigade carried out a full-time and full-element confrontation training in the Gobi Desert.
22	01/14/25	A 79 th GA brigade organized a real-life confrontation training. A battalion cooperated closely with the supporting army aviation, PLAAF and other friendly neighboring forces, and divided into multiple routes for three-dimensional assault to accurately defeat the “enemy.” “The future battlefield is a confrontation between systems, and only a strong system can win the battle.”
23	01/15/25	Reporters visited a 74 th GA brigade’s simulation training center and saw red-blue confrontation training under the background of actual combat carried out in the virtual battlefield.
24	01/16/25	Everyone in a 72 nd GA company can provide written feedback in a service evaluation in “advice cards” on just about everything that happens in the unit.
25	01/16/25	Information about including NCOs in the battalion Party Committee in Xinjiang in order to better understand what is going on in enlisted soldiers’ minds.
26	01/16/25	A discussion about how ideological work in a 75 th GA unit has helped people make it through each day due to multiple personnel issues.
27	01/17/25	A sergeant in an 83 rd GA brigade won the first prize in the military modeling competition of the whole army.
28	01/17/25	Another article about “ideological work” that found that many officers and soldiers were not motivated enough to be the first and the best, and they had a muddle-through mentality in their work.
29	01/17/25	A down-in-the weeds discussion about a Red-Blue confrontation with the Blue Team led by a sergeant.
30	01/19/25	A long discussion about how best to assign new conscripts to their billets based on their background and capabilities.
31	01/19/25	A discussion about how a regiment in Xinjiang conducted training using its engineers, reconnaissance personnel and drones, and combat units.
32	01/19/25	A certain brigade thoroughly studied and implemented the spirit of the Third Plenary Session of the 20 th CCP Central Committee.
33	01/21/25	Discussion about training for a brigade’s armored assault vehicle company.
34	01/23/25	On the eve of the Spring Festival, a brigade of the 78 th GA conducted support training under low temperature conditions.

	35	01/23/25	An award was assigned to a tank in Xinjiang.
PLAN	36	01/06/25	In the East China Sea, a destroyer zhidui, including the Zhengzhou, Xiamen, and Changzhou, formed a combat formation and carried out coordinated training.
	37	01/07/25	The “Peace Ark” hospital ship ended its technical stop in Singapore and set off for home.
	38	01/07/25	The Nanjing ship of a certain naval zhidui carried out actual combat training in a certain sea area. Facing the harassment of “enemy” ships, the ship opened fire at full power and hit the target accurately.
	39	01/10/25	Discussion about an encounter by a land-based border defense regiment with enemy vessels in the East China Sea.
	40	01/12/25	The Nanchang vessel has been commissioned for 5 years.
	41	01/14/25	The 971 st Navy Hospital organized a war injury treatment technology training competition. Dozens of professional backbones from the front line of the mission competed fiercely around more than 20 subjects.
	42	01/16/25	A female soldier on the Navy’s Nanchang ship reveals what is it like to drive a “10,000-ton destroyer.”
	43	01/16/25	On January 16, the Navy Peace Ark Hospital Ship, which successfully completed the “Harmonious Mission-2024” mission, returned smoothly to a military port in Zhoushan, Zhejiang. Crossing the two hemispheres from north to south, sailing more than 30,000 nautical miles, visiting 15 countries in Asia and Africa, and providing medical services to more than 80,000 people in 215 days.
	44	01/22/25	On 15 January, the ETCN organized an award ceremony for the “East China Sea Strong Army Pioneers” involving two advanced groups and 20 advanced individuals.
	45	01/23/25	A review of the Peace Ark hospital ship’s “Harmonious Mission-2024” mission.
	46	01/23/25	Discussion about how a PLAN brigade deals with family visit issues.
	47	01/24/25	The Navy held a video condolence activity on the afternoon of January 24 to send holiday greetings and New Year blessings to the 47th escort formation, Nansha garrison, a submarine unit, a carrier-based aviation unit, and officers and soldiers stationed at the Djibouti support base who were on mission during the Spring Festival.
	48	01/26/25	Beiyushan Island, located in the East China Sea, covers an area of less than 0.5 square kilometers. Seven personnel from an ETCN zhidui are stationed on the island, responsible for the maintenance and management of the island's military facilities.
	49	01/26/25	The story of a senior enlisted sailor of a naval brigade leading young personnel in his unit to make it through each day.
PLAAF	50	01/11/25	A company failed the 2023 year end military training assessment but passed the 2024 evaluation.
	51	01/14/25	Discussion about a radar station in the NTC.
	52	01/14/25	2025 is the final year of the “14 th Five-Year Plan” for military construction, and it is a key year for fighting a tough battle to achieve the goal of the 100 th anniversary of the founding of the army. Achieving the goal of the 100 th anniversary of the founding of the army as scheduled is the will of the Party and the expectation of the people. Discussion of a visit to an air regiment in the CTC.
	53	01/20/25	The Third Affiliated Hospital of the Air Force Medical University has thoroughly studied and implemented the spirit of the CMC’s Political Work Conference. [Unfortunately, the link no longer works as of early February.]
	54	01/22/25	Discussion of issues concerning radar operators.
	55	01/24/25	Recently, the CTCAF organized communication professional backbone training at a training base. After a theoretical lecture, the participating officers and soldiers were still unsatisfied and asked the instructors for advice.
	56	01/30/25	Celebrating Spring Festival. Lots of photos.
PLARF	57	01/07/25	A PLARF brigade has taken multiple measures to stimulate the motivation for training.

	58	01/07/25	Officers and enlisted personnel meet to discuss issues such as drunk driving, online gambling and online loans, stealing secrets and selling secrets, they created vivid “Legal Warning Halls” one by one, and guided officers and soldiers to develop the awareness of respecting, learning, abiding by and using the law through the form of everyone being able to participate and everyone being educated.
	59	01/14/25	Long discussion about NCOs in a PLARF brigade.
	60	01/14/25	A follow on to the article above about NCOs in a PLARF brigade.
	61	01/15/25	Discussion about enlisted troops at a rocket launch unit on a mountain in the winter.
	62	01/20/25	Discussion about a communications fendui meeting concerning Party issues.
	63	01/22/25	Spring Festival discussion.
	64	01/23/25	Discussion about an outstanding NCO in a PLARF brigade.
ETC	65	01/08/25	This is the same article as in the PLAA section but it has a different link.
	66	01/23/25	A certain unit of the ETCN Naval Aviation held a “Junying Pioneer” commendation conference.
STC			NO ARTICLES
WTC	67	01/07/25	On 7 January, a 6.8-magnitude earthquake occurred in Dingri County, Shigatse City, Tibet, causing heavy casualties and a large number of houses collapsed. After the earthquake, the WTC activated the emergency rescue mechanism according to the case, jointly organized and commanded ground forces and air forces to go forward to survey the disaster, dispatched rescue forces according to the troops, medical care, transportation, weather, and other conditions near the earthquake zone, and formed a forward command post at the same time. A Y-20 took the command team to the site.
NTC	68	01/15/25	Discussion about an enlisted NCO serving as the commanding officer on a vessel in the NTCN.
	69	01/14/25	This is the same article as in the PLAAF section but it has a different link.
	70	01/22/25	This is the same article as in the PLAAF section but it has a different link.
CTC	71	01/14/25	This is the same article as in the PLAAF section but it has a different link.

Conclusions

One of the most important conclusions is that English-language articles have basically disappeared. There are obvious patterns concerning which service (PLAA) gets the most attention and the number of Group Armies identified. As the year moves on and we provide a report for each month, other patterns will most likely appear as well.

Appendix A: Acronyms

This appendix provides a list of English acronyms used in the report, such as PLA for People’s Liberation Army. The second column has the full English term. The third column has the Chinese characters that are relevant to the entries that are based on Chinese military terms.

Table A: Acronyms

Acronym	English Term	Chinese
CMC	Central Military Commission	中央军事委员会/中央军委
CPC aka CCP	Chinese Communist Party	中国共产党
CTC	Central Theater Command	中部战区
CTCA	Central Theater Command Army	中部战区陆军

CTCAF	Central Theater Command Air Force	中部战区空军
ETC	Eastern Theater Command	东部战区
ETCA	Eastern Theater Command Army	东部战区陆军
ETCAF	Eastern Theater Command Air Force	东部战区空军
ETCN	Eastern Theater Command Navy	东部战区海军
GA	Group Army	集团军
KF	Key Finding	
MND (aka MOD)	Ministry of National Defense	国防部
NCO	Non-commissioned officer	士官; 军士
NTC	Northern Theater Command	北部战区
NTCA	Northern Theater Command Army	北部战区陆军
NTCAF	Northern Theater Command Air Force	北部战区空军
NTCN	Northern Theater Command Navy	北部战区海军
PLA	People's Liberation Army	人民解放军
PLAA	PLA Army	人民解放军陆军
PLAAF	PLA Air Force	人民解放军空军
PLAN	PLA Navy	人民解放军海军
PLARF	PLA Rocket Force	人民解放军火箭军
PRC	People's Republic of China	中华人民共和国
PWD	Political Work Department	政治工作部
STCN	Southern Theater Command Navy	南部战区海军
TC	Theater Command	战区
TCN	Theater Command Navy	战区海军
WTC	Western Theater Command	西部战区
WTCA	Western Theater Command Army	西部战区陆军
WTCAF	Western Theater Command Air Force	西部战区空军